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Sino-Soviet Relations:
An Interoffice Projection Based on Quantitative Methods

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RP 77-10181D
25 July 1977

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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Progress Report No. 23

25 July 1977

This project consists of three quantitative approaches to Sino-Soviet relations. A team of analysts, drawn from various components of the CIA and concerned with different aspects of Chinese and Soviet affairs, examines on a continuing basis all relevant intelligence items. The first part of this project is to consider the effect of this evidence on the possibility of one or another level of Sino-Soviet hostilities. The analysts' numerical assessments of the likelihood of such hostilities, calculated according to the Bayesian formula of probabilities, are presented in the graph on page 2. The second part of the project is an application of the same Bayesian technique to scenarios of improved relations. The third part of this project is a chart of Sino-Soviet tensions, based upon subjective overall evaluation by the participants. Progress reports are published on a periodic basis by the Office of Regional and Political Analysis.

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Principal Trends:

Evidence reported during the last two months (5 May - 7 July) shows that the probability of hostilities within the next six months remains very low (page 2). Both sides, however, continue to assail one another through public media [items 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 14]. Although the Chinese have expressed a desire to resume the border-river navigation talks, the Soviets have yet to respond [item 9].

The likelihood of significant improvements in Sino-Soviet relations also remains low (page 3), and the overall level of tension between the two countries increased slightly (page 7).

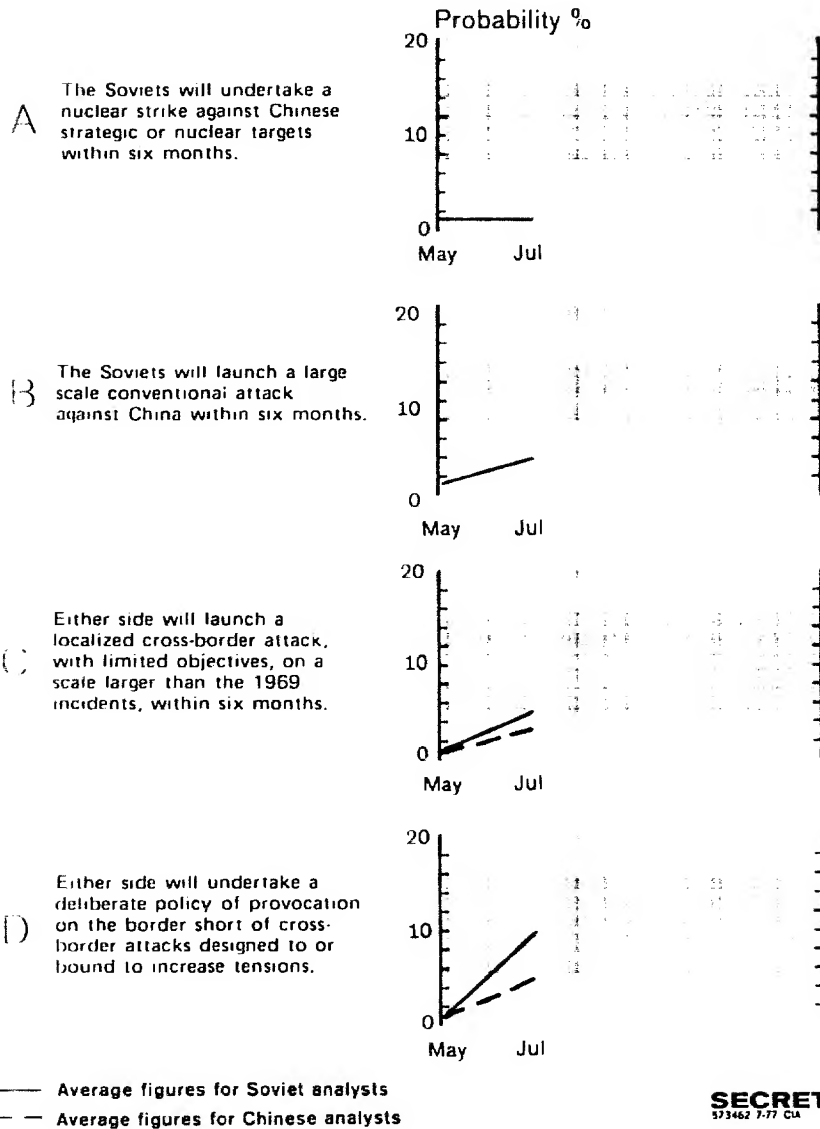
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NOTE-Comments on these reports will be welcomed by [redacted]
[redacted] of ORPA, who are coordinating this project.

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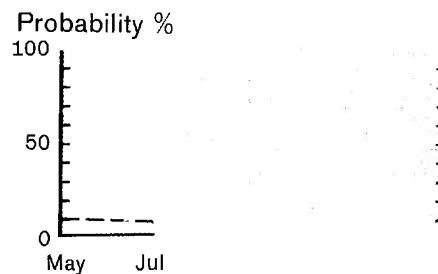
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A Bayesian Analysis of the Likelihood of Sino-Soviet Hostilities

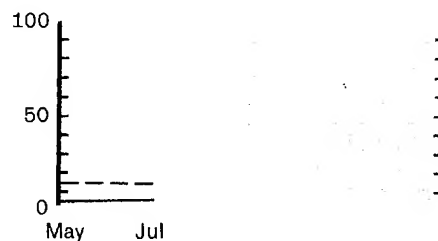


A Bayesian Analysis of the Likelihood of Improvements in Sino-Soviet Relations

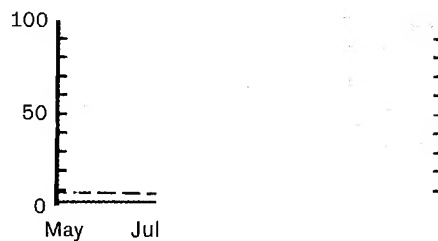
G There will be an effort to settle the border dispute within six months.



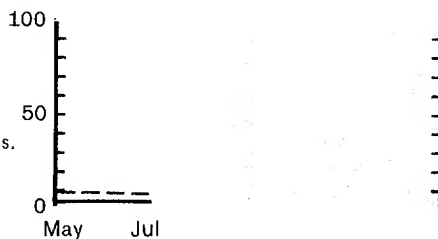
H There will be an effort to significantly improve economic relations within six months.



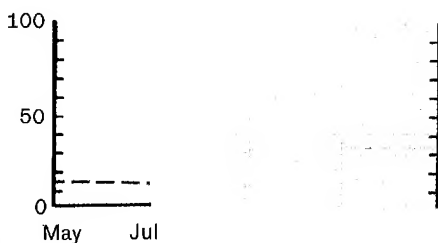
I There will be an effort to restore party-to-party relations within six months.



J There will be an effort to issue a joint statement about mutual relations within six months.



K There will be an effort to hold a meeting of Politburo-level representatives within six months.



———— Average figures for Chinese analysts
----- Average figures for Soviet analysts

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ITEMS OF EVIDENCE CONSIDERED IN
THE REVISION OF 7 JULY

1. A series of authoritative statements from Moscow in May and June, including an "I. Aleksandrov" *Pravda* article and a foreign ministry protest note, have accused Peking of intensified "preparations for war" and slander against the Soviet Union. Although these statements appear designed primarily to isolate China in world opinions and do not directly evoke a military threat to the Soviet Union itself, a *Redstar* article at the end of May commemorating Border Guard Day called for heightened vigilance on the Sino-Soviet border. [REDACTED]

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2. Soviet delegates to a US-USSR Conference on Asia held in Berkeley, California, in May lobbied hard against any US military-related assistance to Peking. Chief of the Far East Section of the CPSU's International Department, Kovalenko, warned that such action would severely jeopardize US-Soviet relations. Sinologist Boris Zanegin affirmed that the Aleksandrov article was aimed at preventing the US from "playing its China card" after the SALT impasse in late March. Zanegin alleged that Moscow had decided that Western arms sales to Peking were a real possibility and acknowledged that the USSR was trying to head off the prospect. [REDACTED]

3. The Soviet delegates to the Berkeley conference claimed that the Sino-Soviet border was quiet, but expressed pessimism about the border negotiations. One official acknowledged that during the recent round of talks the Chinese were even tougher in their positions than they had been in the past. The Soviets admitted that they had hoped for some softening after Mao's death, but, now that the Chinese seemed even more antagonistic, were uncertain about what to do next. [REDACTED]

4. Politburo member Chi Teng-kuei told visiting Japanese on 15 May that Sino-Soviet border talks have been under way for 7-1/2 years and more than 80 sessions have been held, "but not even one agreement has been reached because the USSR is basically insincere." [REDACTED]

5. A 17 May signed article in *Kwangming Daily* denouncing Soviet anti-Chinese propaganda reiterates Peking's willingness not to allow differences of party principle to impede normalization of relations between the two states on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The article warned, however, that such normalization will be impossible if Moscow "indulges in vain hope by resorting to military might or uses 'improved relations' as an excuse to subvert our dictatorship of the proletariat." [REDACTED]

6. In early June, Peking announced the appointment of its new ambassador to Moscow, Wang Yu-ping. Wang is not a Central Committee member nor was his

predecessor. [Ambassador Tolstikov is a Central Committee member. Thus the Chinese continue the practice begun in 1970 of keeping their top diplomat in Moscow at a rank below Central Committee level.] [REDACTED]

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7. On 6 June, Li Hsien-nien accused the USSR, in his banquet speech for visiting Sudanese President Numayri, of using propaganda and "a diplomatic note" to slander China—actions that "extend to state relations the difference on matters of principle between the two sides." [REDACTED]

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Senior PRC Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien, in a 6 June banquet speech, denounced Soviet insincerity in seeking improved Sino-Soviet relations since the death of Mao Tse-tung. Li stated that Soviet tactics since Mao's death have been intended merely to entice or force Peking into abandoning Mao's antirevisionist foreign policy. He pledged that China will continue to follow Mao's policies and will not be intimidated by Moscow's new hard propaganda line. [REDACTED]

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8. On 16 June a strongly worded *People's Daily* commentator article elaborated on Li Hsien-nien's 6 June remarks. The article declared that Peking is impelled by its responsibility to the world's people and by its Marxist-Leninist principle to expose the USSR as "the most dangerous source of world war," to unmask Soviet "neo-colonialism" in the Third World, and to repudiate the Moscow leadership as the "worst renegades" to Marxist-Leninism. The article stated that Soviet propaganda depicting Peking as a danger to world peace is intended to divert world attention from Moscow's own expansionist plans and pledged that Peking will carry its struggle against the Soviet revisionist renegades clique "through to the end."

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9. A Chinese official in Moscow told [REDACTED] that the Chinese have proposed the resumption of the Sino-Soviet border river navigation talks. He said that Peking, as always, is interested in improving state-to-state relations and pointed to this proposal as an example of Chinese efforts in response to the Soviet gestures to Peking after Mao's death. He also said that the Russians thus far had not made a serious effort to address the real issues. [REDACTED]

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10. On 22 June, the Standing Committee of China's NPC sent a telegram to Brezhnev stating that: "On the occasion of your election to the post of chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, we send you our congratulations." [The message was sent by Radio Peking in Russian. It is most likely that it did not appear in Chinese internal media.] On 23 June, TASS reporting on congratulations received from abroad on Brezhnev's new post, listed the Chinese message first in its rundown of congratulatory telegrams. [REDACTED]

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11. On 13 May, a *People's Daily* signed article stated that the Soviet Union "never ceases brandishing nuclear weapons at the Chinese people" and declared that China would survive "even if the Soviet revisionists unleash an aggression against

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China and drop their hydrogen bombs on her." The article recalled Soviet "nuclear blackmail" against China during the 1969 border crisis in detail unprecedented since 1969. [REDACTED]

12. On 19 May, Deputy Foreign Minister Ilichev delivered a strong protest note to the Chinese charge in Moscow. It complained about Peking's stepped-up anti-Soviet propaganda campaign, and stressed that Chinese accusations are "incompatible with the elementary norms" between countries having diplomatic relations. [REDACTED]

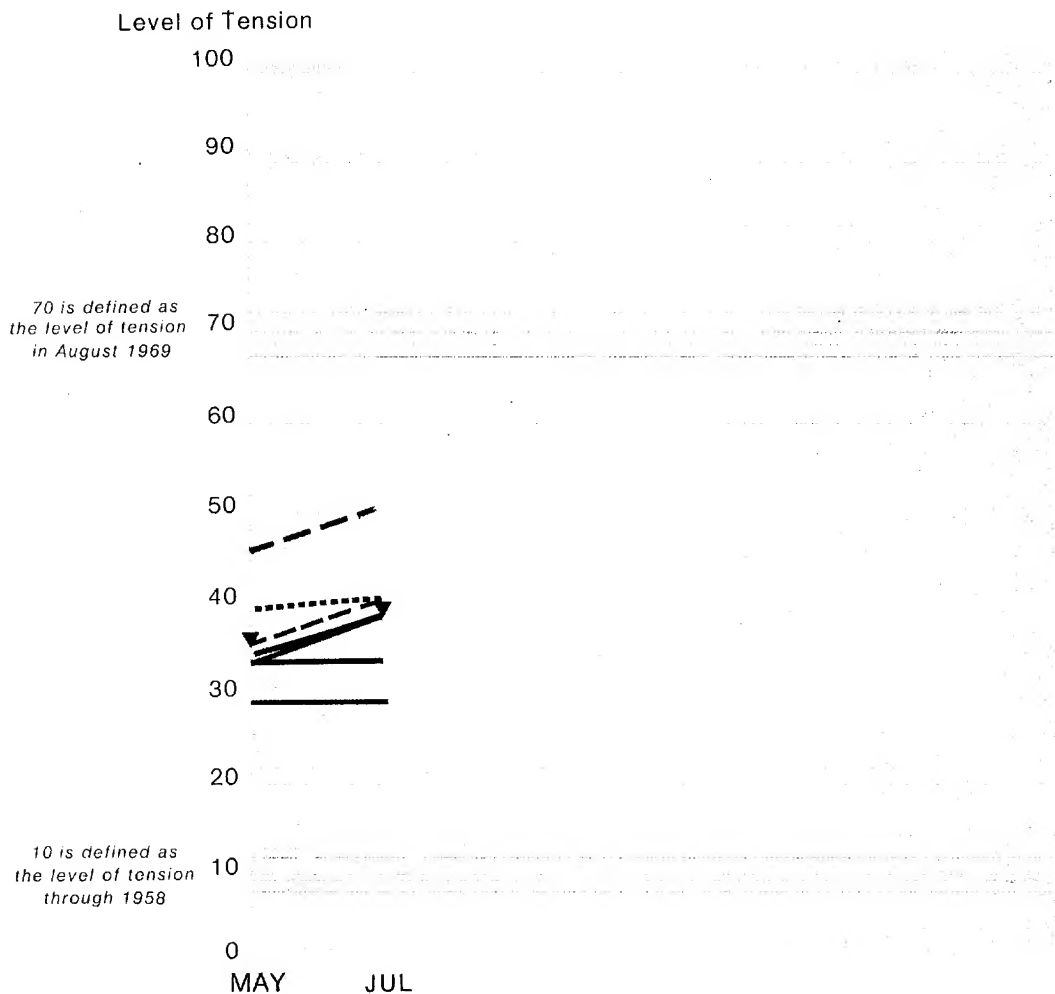
On 26 May, Soviet media publicized a bitter protest note which was delivered to Peking on 19 May. The note castigated Peking's intense anti-Soviet "campaign," Chinese "demagogical tricks," attempts to interfere in Soviet affairs, and Chinese opposition to detente, and charged the Chinese leaders with "assuming a great responsibility" in continuing the campaign. Publication of the note was widely attributed to Soviet anger at Peking's continued bitter polemics, frustration at the lack of progress since Mao's death, and an effort to warn the West and Japan against supporting Peking's anti-Soviet policies. [REDACTED]

13. The Chinese charge in Moscow told a diplomat there that he had rejected the protest note handed to him by Ilichev, describing it as "slanderous," and that a "heated argument" had ensued. The previous Soviet note to the Chinese in protest of anti-Soviet propaganda was delivered on 29 January 1976, but the May 1977 note was the first one ever publicized by the Soviets. [REDACTED]

14. The CPSU Central Committee's theoretical journal, *Kommunist*, signed to press on 23 June, carried a strongly anti-Chinese article justifying Soviet resumption of polemics against Peking on the basis of China's persistently anti-Soviet line. The article repeats earlier themes that the new leadership in China has perpetuated Maoism and is inspired by militarism. In foreign affairs, the article charged that China continues to oppose detente and unites with imperialism in order to slander and undermine Soviet policy initiatives. [REDACTED]

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Individual Assessments of Sino-Soviet Tensions



The points on this chart were chosen by each participant on an intuitive basis, using the rough guidelines shown on the chart.



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